Tips for finding a great script, look for content that has more than a few main characters. Or break those main character’s lines into smaller pieces and create a group of heroines/hero’s instead so that everyone can participate equally.

**Formula 101**

The formula I created for each of my shows in this book is simple. Everyone has roughly the same amount of lines. Everyone is featured in a fairly equal way. The great thing about these shows is that they are also designed for a range of classroom size. The number of characters in each show is interchangeable. You can add, break up lines or take them away. Edit them to fit the size of your class or group! The gender of the characters can also be changed. If a child is offended by being an ‘aunt’ and is happier being a cousin or a sister, let them! This gives them control over their character and in turn feel like they have created it.

**Power to the Children**

The characters in these shows are given non-descript names for a reason as well. You’ll see “Car 1” or “Shark 3” for example because during the course of practicing for the show, I have each group do a visualization exercise to create a name for their character as well as likes and dislikes that can be as similar (or not) to their own. This way, they own it and are excited no matter what part they get.

Before casting a show, I make a deal with the whole group. It usually goes something like this: First I throw a tantrum. No, really. I throw a tantrum and cry out, “But Ms. Carrie, I don’t wanna! I don’t want this part!” The group usually looks at me and laughs and thinks I look ridiculous. Then I say, “I will do my best to give you your first choice, but I can’t give everyone the ‘Fancy Car’ part. So, no matter what part I give you, just like I do my best giving you what you want, I ask that you do your best no matter what part you get.” They all agree and then we seal the deal with an air handshake. I have had 100% cooperation with every group I have taught because of this deal made prior to casting each show.

For Blocking younger students this is helpful:

The “V- Line” is an inverted “V” taped on the floor of the stage or show space. In shows where I suggest a “V-Line”, the students typically stand in their numerical order for many parts of the show. This works great for students who may have a hard time staying still, or to avoid upstaging so every character can be seen. This numerical consistency also helps younger students with their cues, and generally takes the guesswork out of when they say their line.

For props and backdrops or scenery, cardboard is your friend. That, and a big ol’ roll of white craft paper. You can pretty much make anything you need with just these two items. Have the students help you create scenery or decorate signs on the big white craft paper. You can make it long enough so the whole group can sit around it and color. Have as little or as much scenery as you like hanging on the back wall of your performance space. I like to keep it simple.

A simple concept is also what I bring into the costume mindset. Encourage the children to “shop in their closet” for their costume. If they have a full get-up at home, great! Anything goes, as long as it’s not distracting or covers up their face, like a mask. For many of these shows, I set aside a class time for students to decorate t-shirts as their costumes, or make a simple paper cut-out of their character that the children can make into a necklace.

***Uncle Sam: The Musical By Carrie Peckar***

11 players, ages 5-7

10 Players, 1 Uncle Sam

* **Background & Scenery:** Long white craft paper decorated with baseball scoreboard and the name of the town. Patriotic bows or flags taped to the stage.
* **Props:** Foam ball
* **Costumes:** Uncle Sam can wear an oversized patriotic hat and tie, a red white or blue blazer and pants. Baseball players can agree on a team color and wear as much of that as possible, or decorate t-shirts and baseball hats.
* **Notes:** Blocking for this show can include the “V” line. When the baseball is thrown the ball can be pantomimed and thrown toward the audience and Uncle Sam enters through the audience, or a foam ball can be thrown offstage and Uncle Sam enters from that direction. Uncle Sam can sing all the songs along with the rest of the players and Player 4’s name can be created by the individual playing that part. Virginia and Mount Vernon can be changed to where you live.

Player 1: What another great game of baseball!  
  
Player 2: The weather was not hot at all!  A cool 91 degrees!  
  
Player 3: I could play another inning!  
  
Player 4: Me too! Pass me the ball!  
  
(player 4 throws and misses-ball lands backstage. All the players react)  
  
Player 4: OOOPS!  
  
Player 5: Wow, you don’t know your own strength!  That ball went all the way to the tree line.  
  
Player 6: Well, someone go get it.    
  
Player 7: Yeah that was our only ball.    
  
Player 8:  Wait, it looks like someone is bringing it to us. (Points offstage in direction of ball)  
  
Player 9: Well that’s’ really nice of them.   
  
Player 10:  That man looks like he just woke up.    
  
Player 1: Uh oh, He also has a big, baseball size lump on his forehead! (Glares at Player 4)  
  
Player 2: (gulps) Hey, mister are you ok?  
  
Uncle Sam: I think so.  
  
(The other players on the team also run up to see what’s going on)  
  
Player 3: Sorry we woke you from your nap!  
  
Player 5: Yeah, (Player 4’s name) has one, mean strong arm!  
  
Player 4: Please don’t take it personally.... What’s your name?   
  
Player 6: You look a lot like Uncle Sam!  (All agree)  
  
Uncle Sam (rubbing his head) Gee I don’t remember my name.    
  
Player 7: Well where do you live?  
  
Uncle Sam: Gee I don’t know that either…I forget!  
  
Player 8: Uh oh.  It sounds like Uncle Sam has ambrosia!  
  
Player 9: You mean amnesia!  
  
Player 10:  It must be from the baseball!  
  
Uncle Sam: What’s a baseball?  
  
Player 1: It’s for one of America’s favorite pastimes...  
  
Player 2: Let's show him friends then maybe he’ll remember!  
  
(Take Me Out to the Ballgame by Steve Goodman)

Take me out to the ballgame  
Take me out to the crowd  
Buy me some peanuts and crackerjack  
I don't care if I never get back

So it's root, root, root, for the home team  
If they don't win, it's a shame  
It's one, two, three strikes you're out  
At the old ballgame

Take me out to the ballgame  
Take me out to the crowd  
Buy me some peanuts and crackerjack  
And I don't care if I never get back

It's root, root, root, for the home team  
If they don't win, what else is left  
It's one, two, three strikes you're out  
At the old ballgame

Uncle Sam: Sorry kids, that was a great song, but I still don’t remember my name.  
  
Player 3:  Look at your clothing.  
  
Player 4: Yeah, doesn’t red white and blue mean anything?  
  
Player 5:  You’re dressed like an American flag. Not many people can pull that off.    
  
Uncle Sam:  American Flag?  
  
Player 6: Red and white stripes?  50 stars for 50 states!  
  
Player 7: Come on gang, let's show him!  
  
(You’re a Grand Old Flag by George M. Cohen)

You're a grand old flag  
You're a high-flying flag  
And forever in peace may you wave  
You're the emblem of the land I love  
The home of the free and the brave  
Ev'ry heart beats true  
for the Red, White and Blue,  
Where there's never a boast or brag  
But should auld acquaintance be forgot   
Keep your eye on the grand old flag

Uncle Sam: That was catchy but it still doesn’t ring any bells.    
  
Player 8:  Come on, look around you’re in Virginia...Mount Vernon?    
  
Player 9: Mount Vernon Community Children’s Theatre?  
  
Player 10: One of the 50 states of America, we’ve got it all!  
  
(This Land Is Your Land by Woody Guthrie)

This land is your land, this land is my land  
From California to the New York island  
From the Redwood Forest, to the gulf stream waters  
This land was made for you and me  
As I went walking that ribbon of highway  
I saw above me that endless skyway  
And saw below me that golden valley  
This land was made for you and me

(Repeat)  
  
Uncle Sam: You kids are trying so hard to help me.  But I could really go for a snack.    
  
Player 1: Who can think of food at a time like this? We’re so close!  
  
Player 2: We’ve got to make him remember who he is!  
  
Player 3: Well I can’t think on an empty stomach either...  
  
Player 4: Well we can’t go to my house...  
  
Player 5: Why not?  
  
Player 6 : SOMEONE (looks at 6) drank all the Sunny D...  
  
Player 7: ...and ate all the Doritos, Cheetos...  
  
Player 8: and an entire box of Sugar Pops! (looks at 10)  
  
Player 10: What? I’m a growing boy!    
  
Player 9: Well we can go to my house and eat.  Its over yonder on that ridge near the range…(points offstage)  
  
Player 10: Lets go get some food!  
  
(Home on the Range by Dr. Brewster Higley)

Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam  
Where the deer and the antelope play  
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word  
And the skies are not cloudy all day

Home, home on the range  
Where the deer and the antelope play  
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word  
And the skies are not cloudy all day

(Uncle Sam has fallen asleep in the middle of Home on the Range and is snoring.)  
  
Player 1: Uncle Sam wake up!  
  
Player 2: Our singing was just too beautiful!  
  
Player 3: It lulled him right to sleep!  
  
Player 4: Can you blame him?  
  
Player 5: Yeah, we sound like a choir of angels!  
  
Player 6: I wouldn’t go THAT far...  
  
Player 7: Would you two quit your arguing!  
  
Player 8: We have to think of something quick! Sing something more lively to wake him up! Ready?  
  
(Yankee Doodle American Folk Song)  
Yankee Doodle went to town,   
Riding on a pony   
Stuck a feather in his hat,   
And called it macaroni.

(At the end of song one of the players sticks a feather in his hat and wakes up Uncle Sam who is very startled)  
  
Uncle Sam: Ouch!  That hurt!  You kids need to be more careful… don’t you know who I am?  
  
Player 9:  We’ve been trying to tell you because you forgot!  
  
Uncle Sam:  Forgot?  These pants are a dead giveaway!  I’m UNCLE SAM!!!  
  
Player 10:  He remembers!  
  
(everyone cheers)  
  
Uncle Sam:  I’m starving boys and girls-lets go have a big barbeque picnic!  
  
All:  That's what summer is all about!  
  
(In the Good Ol’ Summertime by Shields and Evan)

In the good old summertime, in the good old summertime.

Strolling through the shady lanes with your baby mine.

You hold her hand, and she holds yours,

and that's a very good sign.

That she's your tootsie-wootsie,

in the good old summertime.

(Bow and curtain)

***Let’s Make a Potion By Carrie Peckar***

15 Players, ages 5-7

7 West Witches/Wizards, 7 East Witches/Wizards, Announcer

**Background and Scenery:** White craft paper decorated with the name of the show, 2 cardboard cauldrons taped to a chair or some other ‘base’ so they can be seen.

**Props**: Cheese

**Costumes:** Party hats with a brim taped on, decorated shirts.

**Notes:**  This show uses the “V” line for blocking.

The part of the announcer can be played by an assistant or broken into smaller parts and played by students.

The lucky item and the prize can be changed and picked by the group you are working with.

The first potion that begins “Rat tails…” can be changed and written with the group to make it more personal and fun, it just has to rhyme.

Any game show music can be played for the entrance music for both teams.

Announcer: Welcome to Let’s Make A Potion! Where two groups compete to win fabulous prizes. Today it’s the Witches and Wizards of the West (play game show music while actors walk single file to the stage through the audience) versus the Witches and Wizards of the East! (Play game show music while these actors walk single file to the stage through the audience). Today’s prize features a brand new wand that makes unlimited ice cream and donuts, and can change any room into your own private Chuck E. Cheese!

(Witches and Wizards of the West stand stage right on the “V line”)

West Witch 1: I want that wand

West Witch 2: Witches and Wizards of the West we have to win!

West Witch 3: Well we’ve practiced stirring sludge for weeks!

West Witch 4: Look at these muscles! (Flexes arm muscle)

West Witch 5: We are so taking home that wand!

West Witch 6: You didn’t forget the buffalo warts, right?

West Witch 7: They’re safe in my pocket!

(Witches and Wizards of the East stand stage left on the “V line”)

East Witch 1: We need that wand everyone!

East Witch 2: The Witches and Wizards of the East have it covered.

East Witch 3: Imagine a wand that makes real donuts!

East Witch 4: Yeah, the fake donuts rot my teeth!

East Witch 5: So do those hairy spider tails!

East Witch 6: But we need those for our spell!

East Witch 7: (looks at East Witch 6) Just don’t forget the words this time, ok?!

Announcer: You know the rules! The first group to successfully make a potion and a spell that turns our studio audience into a pile of dust (All players give an evil laugh) wins! You can use any ingredient for your potion except, of course, my lucky cheese! (Holds up lucky cheese and players react with OHHHH!) Which has been in my family for generations! Wizards and Witches to your cauldrons!

(Witches and Wizards of the West step forward stage right and Witches and Wizards of the East step forward stage left creating semi-circles around their cauldrons, making hand motions as they throw in their ingredients)

West Witch1: Rat tails

West Witch 2: And fingernails

West Witch 3: Mane of horse

West Witch 4: and hoof of cow

West Witch 5: hat pails

West Witch 6: and tiny snails

West Witch 7: Chocolate milk

East Witch 1: and cat’s meow

East Witch 2: Sugar and boogers

East Witch 3: and clocks and socks

East Witch 4: Big black bears

East Witch 5: and wooden chairs

East Witch 6: Flying hawks

East Witch 7: and chicken pox

All: Goldilocks and rotten pears!! (all realize they were saying the same spell and glare at each other)

West Witch 1: They’re using the same spell as us!

West Witch 2: Who was in charge of finding this spell? (3&4 raise hands)

West Witch 3: We went to the ooky spooky section of the witch library!

West Witch 4: They only had so many “pile of dust spells” (make quotation hands).

West Witch 5: What are we going to do now?

West Witch 6: We have to think quickly!

West Witch 7: Buffalo warts have always brought me luck! (sprinkles them in cauldron)

East Witch 1: Everything was working so well (puts head in hands)

East Witch 2: I can’t believe we were practicing the same spell!

East Witch 3: Don’t panic!!! Stay calm everyone!! (Runs around the other team screaming in panic)

East Witch 4: Don’t worry we just have to use plan ‘b’

East Witch 5: What’s plan ‘b’?

East Witch 6: Is that where we do the hokey pokey?

East Witch 7: NO! Plan ‘b’ is when…(holds hand over mouth to whisper to EW6)

West Witch 1: Double double toil and trouble.

West Witch 2: Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

West Witch 3: I think that I shall never see…

West Witch 4: A poem as lovely as a tree.

West Witch: Four score and seven years ago…

West Witch 6: Four score and seven years ago?

West Witch 7: We sound like poets and politicians, not witches and wizards!

East Witch 1: Lightning stars and rolling thunder.

East Witch 2 Lizards moles and things down under.

East Witch 3: Light the sky with fire and ice.

East Witch 4; Stand back and throw in the mice.

East Witch 5: Wing of bat and eye of toad…

East Witch 6: Pack your bags and hit the road.

East Witch 7: (Points to the cauldron excitedly) It’s getting green…I see lumps!

(Choreographed dance to “I Put a Spell on You” Hocus Pocus version)

West Witch 1: (Crosses arms and stomps foot in anger) This potion isn’t working!

West Witch 2: We can’t lose this!

West Witch 3: Did you put enough buffalo warts in? (7 nods)

West Witch 4: Don’t worry look what I got! (holds up cheese that was stolen sometime during “I Put a Spell on You” song.)

West Witch 5: But we don’t know what that will do!

West Witch 6: This cheese is so stinky…and powerful!

West Witch 7: We’ve got to win-throw it in!

East Witch 1: (waves hand in air as if smelling something bad) I smell something fishy going on.

East Witch 2: It’s not fish-it’s the cheese!

East Witch 3: That’s not fair they are cheating!

East Witch 4: That cheese is so stinky-but powerful!

East Witch 5: They are sure to win now!

East Witch 6: (Points to cauldron) Look! Their cauldron is boiling over!

East Witch 7: Everyone take cover, quick!

(All witches take cover and cauldron makes sound effect and lights flicker on and off-all the witches have turned into frogs and start hopping around the stage)

All: Ribbet!

Announcer 1: Well it just goes to show you anything can happen on Let’s Make A Potion! Tune in next time when our next team of witches tries to turn our studio audience into…spaghetti!

(Ribbets and jumping continues as game show music plays. Bow and curtain)

***March of the Penguins: The Musical By Carrie Peckar***

13 Players, ages 5-7

13 Penguins

**Props:** 13 eggs, 2 small skateboards

**Costumes:** Black baseball hats painted with an orange and yellow brim, black t-shirts painted with a white belly.

**Notes:** Penguin 5 is an older, wiser penguin.

During the ‘Greased Lightning’ song, 2 penguins can use the skateboards to have a belly race.

Eggs can be made from anything you want and placed in 2 baskets on either side of the stage for the players to get them in an orderly fashion.

(Splish Splash by Bobby Darin)

Splish, splash, I was takin’ a bath  
Long about a Saturday night, yeah  
A rub dub, just relaxin’ in the tub  
Thinkin’ everything was alright

yes, I was a-splishin’ and a-splashin’  
I was a-rollin’ and a-strollin’  
Yeah, I was a-movin’ and a-groovin’  
We was a-reelin’ with the feelin’

Splish, splash I was takin’ a bath!

(All Penguins stand in numerical order downstage)

Penguin 1: I love being a penguin.

Penguin 2: I don’t think there is anything else I’d rather be.

Penguin 3: We’re the most handsomest creatures!

Penguin 4: But of course! Who else can have a super duper speed race on their…

All Penguins:…Bellies!!!!

(Greased Lightning by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey)

Go, grease lightnin’, you’re burnin’ up the quarter mile  
(Grease lightnin’, go grease lightnin’)  
Go, grease lightnin’, you’re coastin’ through the heat lap trials  
(Grease lightnin’, go grease lightnin’)  
You are supreme, the chicks’ll scream for grease lightnin’

(Repeat)

(Penguins return to numerical order downstage)

Penguin 5: Settle down everybody, settle down!

Penguin 6: Oh, come on, we’re just having a little fun.

Penguin 7: Yeah. You do remember what fun is, don’t you, old man?

Penguin 8: That “old man” is right. All of you need to preserve your energy for our long journey ahead.

Penguin 9: For some of us it is our first journey!

Penguin 10: Just what is this journey everyone keeps on talking about? Journey this. Journey that. It better be a new delicious fish snack because I’m hungry!

Penguin 11: No…a journey is a long walk we all must take to find our one true love

(swoons)

Penguins 12: (sarcastically) Yeah and then we have to freeze our fins off taking care of one another-how wonderful!

Penguin 13: We must also keep our balance while protecting our babies!

Penguin 1: Gee, being a penguin sounds harder than I imagined.

Penguin 2: Yeah, I think I’d rather be a fish and stay here in the water! Goodbye!

Penguin 3: Wait! We need everybody if we’re going to make this journey together…

(Penguins start waddling to the Penguin March staying in their order counter clockwise around the perimeter of the stage. They stop when they are in a row upstage.)

(Penguin March)

All: I’m a penguin black and white

I can’t fly but that’s all right.

I’ve got feathers that’s not fur

And I lay eggs like other birds.

1,2

3,4

5,6,7,8,

They’re great!

I just swim to get my meals

But I watch out for leopard seals.

I’m from the south as you may know

And now it’s time for me to go.

Penguin 4: Are we there yet?

Penguin 6: My feet are tired.

Penguin 5: (points offstage) Well we have to go over this ice mound and then from there it’s another 50 miles.

Penguin 7: 50 miles!!! I’ll never make it!

Penguin 8: Quit your complaining we’ve been doing this for centuries, let’s go…we’re proud penguins!!

(I’m Gonna Be (500 Miles) by The Proclaimers)

But I would walk 500 miles  
And I would walk 500 more  
Just to be the one who walks a thousand miles  
To fall down at your door

Buh duh duh duh (4x)

Buh duh duh duh duh duh duh duh (Repeat)

Penguin 10: Are we there yet?

Penguin 9: Yes, we are!!!

(Penguins disperse and waddle around the stage in celebration. Then one by one they realize they are freezing)

Penguin 12: This is the cold I was talking about. My fins are already forming icicles!

Penguin 13: I can’t feel my beak!

Penguin 11: Quick we need to huddle now to keep warm! (All penguins form a huddle center stage)

Penguin 1: Get closer I’m freezing

Penguin 2: It’s working! I’m getting warmer!

Penguin 3: I feel like I’m on a tropical island!

(The Heat is On by Glenn Frey)

The heat is on, on the street  
Inside your head, on every beat  
And the beat’s so loud, deep inside  
The pressure’s high, just to stay alive  
‘Cause the heat is on

(Penguins get their egg and stand in numerical order downstage.)

All Penguins: I’m a King Penguin

Black and white

Living at the South Pole

Day and night

One big egg I lay (hold up egg)

And fish I eat

I hold my egg

Upon my feet. (balance egg on feet)

Penguin 4: I can’t wait for my baby to be the fastest super-duper speed racer in the Antarctic!

Penguin 5: Keep your eggs as warm as you can!

Penguin 6: I can’t wait to teach my baby how to waddle and catch fish!

Penguin 7: I can’t wait for all our babies to talk and have play dates and be the best of friends!

(Be My Baby by The Ronettes)

So won’t you, please, be my, be my baby  
my one and only baby  
be my, be my baby now,   
Wha oh oh oh

(Penguins place their eggs back in the two baskets)

Penguin 8: Penguins! We did it! It’s time to make our journey back to the sea!

Penguin 9: I can’t believe my first journey is over-it went by so fast!

Penguin 10: We’ll always have the memories…goodbye cold ice field. (Waves goodbye)

Penguin 11: Until next year…

(Penguins start marching staying in their order counter clockwise around the perimeter of the stage making a full box circle back to their original position from the beginning of the show.)

Penguin 12: Are we there yet?

Penguin 13: Yes, we are!

(Under the Sea by Samuel E. Wright)

The seaweed is always greener  
In somebody else’s lake  
You dream about going up there  
But that is a big mistake  
Just look at the world around you  
Right here on the ocean floor  
Such wonderful things surround you  
What more is you lookin’ for?

Under the sea  
Under the sea  
Darling it’s better  
Down where it’s wetter  
Take it from me  
Up on the shore they work all day  
Out in the sun they slave away  
While we devotin’  
Full time to floatin’  
Under the sea

(Bow and curtain)